

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

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EB-07 AID-05 COME-00 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 SAM-01 FEA-01

OES-03 ERDA-05 AS-01 /090 W
----- 100900

P R 142229Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8518

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 0156

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2.

TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, ENRG, TW, CA

SUBJ: CANADA-TAIWAN RELATIONS

REF: TOKYO 0360

1. GOC REACTION TO GIST OF REFTEL WAS AS WE EXPECTED, TO WIT, UNQUALIFIED DISCLAIMER. EXTAFF CHINESE DESK OFFICER HIGGENBOTHAM SAID THAT THERE WAS "ABSOLUTELY NO BASIS" TO POINTS MADE BY SIMMONS AND THAT THEY PRESENTED AN "ENTIRELY DISTORTED STORY." HE ADDED THAT HE HAD SEEN SIMMONS BEFORE LATTER LEFT FOR ASIA BUT THAT THEIR MEETING GAVE NO GROUNDS FOR THE YARN IN REFTEL. SIMMONS, ACCORDING TO HIGGENBOTHAM, WAS TRAVELLING UNDER A GRANT FROM THE CANADA COUNCIL NOT FROM MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY, TRADE AND COMMERCE. CANADA COUNCIL IS GOC ORGANIZATION WHICH SUBSIDIZES CULTURAL AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES AND, AS HIGGENBOTHAM PUT IT, THEY CAN SEND SOMEONE TO MARS FOR ALL WE CARE.

2. LINDSAY MACNEIL, DIRECTOR, PACIFIC, ASIA AND AFRICA BUREAU, MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY, TRADE AND COMMERCE (ITC)
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ECHOED HIGGENBOTHAM'S VIEWS. HE INDICATED SIMMONS

TRAVELLING UNDER CANADA COUNCIL GRANT AND HAD STOPPED FOR TALKS AT ITC BEFORE TRIP. HE ADDED THAT THESE DISCUSSIONS DID NOT CORRESPOND TO INFO IN REFTEL AND SAID THAT "HE (SIMMONS) SEEMED TO HAVE SOME HIGH-FLOWN IDEAS ABOUT WHAT HE WAS GOING TO DO."

3. REGARDING TAIWANESE INTEREST IN CANDU, EMBASSY ASSUMES THIS MUCH IS PROBABLY TRUE FOR NUMEROUS REASONS BUT AECL HAS BEEN TOLD CATEGORICALLY THEY ARE NOT TO REOPEN QUESTION OF A CANDU FOR TAIWAN WITH ANYONE. AECL OFFICIALS PERSONALLY REGRET THIS BECAUSE TAIWAN WAS ONE OF THE VERY FEW PAYING CUSTOMERS THEY EVER HAD FOR A REACTOR.

4. COMMENT: GOC IS PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE ABOUT ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH PRC AND TAKES GREAT PAINS TO AVOID ANY ACTION WHICH MIGHT PROVOKE PRC AND JEOPARDIZE THE RELATIONSHIP. HIGGENBOTHAM EXPLAINED THAT CANADIANS HAVE ACTIVE TRADE WITH TAIWAN AND WE UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS CERTAIN AMOUNT OF OFFICIAL ENCOURAGEMENT OF THIS. AT SAME TIME, HIGGENBOTHAM EMPHASIZED THAT GOC CAREFUL TO KEEP ANY SUCH CONTACTS OUT OF GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT CHANNELS AND HE ADDED THAT, EVEN IF GOC WANTED TO PUT OUT FEELERS OF TYPE DESCRIBED BY SIMMONS, THEY WOULD NOT USE SOMEONE LIKE SIMMONS.

5. THIS COULD, CONCEIVABLY, BE CASE OF GOC PROTESTING TOO MUCH. IF ITC WANTED TO TAKE SOUNDINGS ON THE ISSUES DISCUSSED BY SIMMONS, THE CASE WITH WHICH HE COULD BE DISOWNED (AS PER HIGGENBOTHAM AND MACNEIL) WOULD MAKE HIM IDEAL VEHICLE. HIS CLAIMS TO EMBASSY TOKYO OF ITC SPONSORSHIP SUGGESTS THAT HE IS EITHER AN INEXPERT ENVOY WHO BLEW HIS CANADA COUNCIL COVER FOR NO VERY GOOD REASON OR THAT HE WAS IN FACT TAKING ON AIRS AS GOC OFFICIALS CLAIM. JOHNSON

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